



WILLIAMSTOWN

Berkshire County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Williamstown is located in the northwestern corner of Massachusetts, bordering Vermont and New York. Williamstown is a rural residential community that is the home of Williams College, a highly selective liberal arts institution.

The town creates a cosmopolitan flair in rural New England. The July 1984 issue of Connoisseur stated that Williamstown has the most art per capita of any American community. Williamstown is the home of the Sterling and Clark Art Institute, which houses one of the world's largest collections of Renoir and other impressionists. The Williams College Museum of Art has a fine collection in its own right. The Williamstown Theatre Festival, operating during the summer months, brings outstanding Broadway and Hollywood performers to the town.

Williamstown, despite the upscale art community, continues to possess many rural characteristics and the town has been proactive in preserving open space. Being located in the Berkshires, outstanding outdoor recreational activities abound, ranging from golf and tennis to cross-country skiing and hiking.

Williamstown was recognized by Norman Crampton in his book, The 100 Best Small Towns in America, which ranked Williamstown as the 18th best American Small Town, the only Massachusetts community included in the top 100.

(Narrative supplied by community)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Northwestern Massachusetts, bordered by Clarksburg, North Adams, and Adams on the east; New Ashford and Hancock on the south; Berlin and Petersburg, New York, on the west; and Pownal, Vermont, on the north. Williamstown is 21 miles north of Pittsfield, 68 miles northwest of Springfield, 138 miles northwest of Boston, and 113 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 46.91 sq. miles

Land Area: 46.89 sq. miles

Population: 8,220

Density: 175 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Great Barrington Station)

Normal temperature in January.....20.1°F
Normal temperature in July.....68.1°F
Normal annual precipitation.....44.8"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Williamstown, Berlin

Regional Planning Agency

Berkshire County

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 458-3500

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Town Manager

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1765

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%
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Total Registered 4,362

Democrats 1,370 31.4 % Republicans 605 13.9 % Other parties 2 0.0 % Unenrolled Voters 2,385 54.7 %

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Williamstown town, Berkshire County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	8,424	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population	8,424	100.0
Male	3,939	46.8	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	233	2.8
Female	4,485	53.2	Mexican	70	0.8
Under 5 years	275	3.3	Puerto Rican	43	0.5
5 to 9 years	349	4.1	Cuban	12	0.1
10 to 14 years	397	4.7	Other Hispanic or Latino	108	1.3
15 to 19 years	1,157	13.7	Not Hispanic or Latino	8,191	97.2
20 to 24 years	1,432	17.0	White alone	7,512	89.2
25 to 34 years	564	6.7	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years	835	9.9	Total population	8,424	100.0
45 to 54 years	1,020	12.1	In households	6,074	72.1
55 to 59 years	389	4.6	Householder	2,753	32.7
60 to 64 years	359	4.3	Spouse	1,413	16.8
65 to 74 years	643	7.6	Child	1,510	17.9
75 to 84 years	654	7.8	Own child under 18 years	1,220	14.5
85 years and over	350	4.2	Other relatives	126	1.5
Median age (years)	35.6	(X)	Under 18 years	40	0.5
18 years and over	7,131	84.7	Nonrelatives	272	3.2
Male	3,294	39.1	Unmarried partner	103	1.2
Female	3,837	45.5	In group quarters	2,350	27.9
21 years and over	5,721	67.9	Institutionalized population	340	4.0
62 years and over	1,855	22.0	Noninstitutionalized population	2,010	23.9
65 years and over	1,647	19.6	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male	604	7.2	Total households	2,753	100.0
Female	1,043	12.4	Family households (families)	1,694	61.5
RACE			With own children under 18 years	680	24.7
One race	8,224	97.6	Married-couple family	1,413	51.3
White	7,648	90.8	With own children under 18 years	517	18.8
Black or African American	229	2.7	Female householder, no husband present	218	7.9
American Indian and Alaska Native	9	0.1	With own children under 18 years	130	4.7
Asian	263	3.1	Nonfamily households	1,069	38.5
Asian Indian	43	0.5	Householder living alone	901	32.7
Chinese	90	1.1	Householder 65 years and over	433	15.7
Filipino	8	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years	705	25.6
Japanese	24	0.3	Households with individuals 65 years and over	969	35.2
Korean	62	0.7	Average household size	2.21	(X)
Vietnamese	4	-	Average family size	2.80	(X)
Other Asian ¹	32	0.4	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	10	0.1	Total housing units	3,053	100.0
Native Hawaiian	-	-	Occupied housing units	2,753	90.2
Guamanian or Chamorro	-	-	Vacant housing units	300	9.8
Samoan	5	0.1	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	5	0.1	occasional use	127	4.2
Some other race	65	0.8	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)	1.8	(X)
Two or more races	200	2.4	Rental vacancy rate (percent)	6.2	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one</i>			HOUSING TENURE		
<i>or more other races:</i> ³			Occupied housing units	2,753	100.0
White	7,790	92.5	Owner-occupied housing units	2,015	73.2
Black or African American	274	3.3	Renter-occupied housing units	738	26.8
American Indian and Alaska Native	54	0.6	Average household size of owner-occupied units	2.31	(X)
Asian	376	4.5	Average household size of renter-occupied units	1.91	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	64	0.8			
Some other race	88	1.0			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State	46
Conventional Federal	0

Rental Assistance (DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP)	5
Federal (Section 8)	94



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Williamstown is situated in Berkshire County, a region of hills and low mountains that widen to create the Berkshire Valley in the south. The major cities and towns are linked together by U.S. Route 7. North Adams and Pittsfield are major points of entry for rail freight into Massachusetts, and the region has several commercial airports.

Major Highways

The principal highways are State Route 2, which runs E-W across northern Massachusetts, and U.S. Route 7, which runs N-S through the Berkshires.

Rail

The Springfield Terminal Railway offers freight service to Williamstown. Contact number: (508) 663-1073

Bus

Williamstown is a member of the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA), which offers fixed route service, and paratransit services for the elderly and disabled. Peter Pan Bus Lines provides service to Boston. Bonanza Bus Lines provides service to New York City, Springfield, and Providence, RI.

Other

Harriman & West Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located in the neighboring town of North Adams, has a 4,300'x 100' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: None.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

Chapin Library of Rare Books
Stetson Hall
Williams College
(413) 597-2462
Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute
225 South Street
(413) 458-9545
Williams College Museum of Art
Main Street
(413) 597-2429

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

Thompson Infirmary

Long Term Care

Sweet Brook Nursing Home

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

Willowood N H Of Williamstown

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.